

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**APRIL 22, 2010**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a Special Meeting on Thursday, April 22, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. in the Library Community Room, 515 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield, CT.

Present: Councilors Drake, Hurley, Kotkin, McAlister, Manousos, Montinieri, and Chairperson Hemmann.

Absent: Councilor Roberts, Deputy Mayor Console

Also present: Jeff Bridges, Town Manager, Attorney Jack Bradley and Attorney John Dombrowski.

Councilor Drake moved, **“TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS THE LETTER RECEIVED TO EXTEND THE DATE OF ACCEPTANCE OF WILKUS FARM PROPERTY”**, seconded by Councilor Montinieri.

Councilor Manousos moved **“TO TABLE THE SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING AT 6:00 P.M. TO START THE BUDGET MEETING, SCHEDULED AT 6:40 P.M.”** seconded by Councilor Hurley. All Councilor present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Councilor McAlister left the meeting.

Councilor Manousos moved **“TO TABLE THE BUDGET SESSION TO HEAR ATTORNEYS AND VOTE ON ADJOURNED SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL”** seconded by Councilor Hurley. All Councilor present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

**OPEN SESSION REGARDING WILKUS FARM**

Jack Bradley commented that on the undated proposed amendment, paragraph one addressing Mr. Dombrowski be changed to “agreement of sale will be extended to take place within 30 days.” It was noted that this tracks the existing agreement “to take place within 30 days of the delivery to the buyer of the proof of compliance of the completion of the remedial action of the environmental issues taken by seller.” He also suggested “but not later than August 15.”

Councilor Drake noted that he would like to add in front of remedial action “successful remedial action” because if it is not successful than the 30 days isn’t going to count.

Jack Bradley noted that the only thing that is being changed is the closing date.

Councilor Manousos asked what the definition of compliance.

Jack Bradley stated his understanding is that it is a standard of the trade that there is a SRA report drawn up and the law is clear that compliance means doing this and that but ultimately it's the consultant that will sign off on to whether or not compliance has been reached. If compliance is not met, then it is a matter of dueling experts.

Councilor Hurley moved **"TO PURCHASE WILKUS FARMS"** seconded by Councilor Drake. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Councilor Manousos moved **"TO READJOURN TO THE BUDGET SESSION"** seconded by Councilor Hurley. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Councilor Manousos asked how Michael Turner felt about the \$199,000.

Michael Turner responded that it is their current level of funding this year so that is being used for next year.

Councilor Manousos inquired how Middletown Avenue is being paid for.

Michael Turner responded that there are three years of LOCIP money that is saved to get to the point where there is enough money to bid the project and noted that Goff Road is being paved at this time.

Michael Turner reported on Morrison Avenue (#34) for \$200,000. A third and final mailing was sent out and received the final four results and had one recommending 4B and one recommending No. 2 which was a curving option. The overwhelming majority of people like either option 4A or 4B which is where Capital Improvement Committee and the Council subcommittee have been pointing.

Councilor Montinieri asked about the \$200,000 and asked if there was an understanding that there was a contribution from the residents.

Michael Turner responded that it has not been factored into this number.

Councilor Montinieri asked if the \$200,000 reflects the cost of the project without factoring in reimbursement.

Michael Turner responded that the \$200,000 does reflect the cost without factoring in reimbursement.

Councilor Montinieri referred to the Façade program and stated that since it is a fixed number at the end of the budget, if there is 10, 15 or 20% contribution from Morrison, he would like Council to consider to put that savings towards the Façade program and raise that number. Paul Montinieri noted that the Facade program which is the only one that generates matching funds exceeding the amount used.

Councilor Hurley stated that he would think it would be put into projects to be determined.

Councilor Drake suggested that the list of things that hasn't been done should also be looked at.

Jeff Bridges suggested that if there is money it should go to Redevelopment and also noted that there are plenty options. Jeff Bridges also noted that the Facade program has the biggest immediate impact.

Councilor Hurley asked how much additional money do people pay if they have received funds from the Facade program.

Michael Turner responded that it is 50/50.

Councilor Hurley asked if the Middletown Avenue project entailed ripping up the entire road.

Michael Turner responded that it will need to be entirely ripped up and new drainage. Michael Turner also noted that project #25 is a new project for the Library RFID system in which tags need to be inserted into collections of books and compact discs and to purchase or lease the equipment.

Councilor Manousos asked if the Library money is being set aside for future years or is it actually being spent.

Mike Turner responded that Laurel Goodgion had given him a breakdown of the equipment and software and stated that there are ways for her to phase it in. He didn't think it had actually been bid on yet. They are also going to look at lease purchase of the equipment because it has a relatively short shelf life.

Councilor Montinieri asked if the \$25,000 is going towards the lease purchase agreement then the Council would be making a commitment for future years.

Councilor Drake responded that it is not because the tags would need to be put in the books before they do the next step.

Michael Turner reported on Project #41 which is the drainage at the Old Academy Building. Water is coming into the basement on the backside of the building through the hatchway. The hatchway will need to be replaced, building a new drainage and tying it out into Main Street by Center Street.

Michael Turner noted that was passed out by Tony Martino is a compendium of all of the projects that are on the books, a description of the projects that have not been funded to date that are on the books.

Tony Martino added that the projects combined total \$203,063,614, which includes the two bonds for the high school and Hanmer.

John Mullin reported that he and Michael Turner reviewed the projects and have visited the sites that had issues and met with the vendors and felt the numbers were good.

Councilor Manousos asked if he felt comfortable with what Council is willing to spend what has been presented are priority items.

John Mullin responded yes. They are not looking at issues that may benefit only one house but what is best for the Town and for the streets before a final decision is made.

Councilor Kotkin asked what the last two projects that came off the list before being submitted.

John Mullin stated that a recommendation was made that went to the Planning and Zoning Commission and in the Manager's budget a reduction was made of \$200,000 to get down to the Manager's target number.

Jeff Bridges noted that the first big number was paving and another \$150,000 was taken off.

Michael Turner also noted that the Little League project was taken out because they don't want to start a project and leave it for three or four years. Michael Turner also explained that once the current year is set aside, they look to take the requests that didn't get funded and put them in the short term and then try to balance out.\

John Mullin stated that when the committee first started, the first year request that came in through the various departments totaled \$6.7 millions and had to be cut.

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Councilor McAlister left the room.

### ENGINEERING

Michael Turner, Town Engineer, reported that there are no substantial changes to the Engineering Budget. The programs consist of administering the pavement and inspection program, plan review surveys, inspections of internal design projects, plan reviews for Planning and Zoning, customer service, requests from other Boards, Commissions and other departments requesting input, Wetland Commissions, Flood Board, storm water, Phase 2, and instituting the Capital Improvements programs. There has been no proposed changes in staffing levels, but for the reassignment of the Sidewalk Inspector Lonnie Davis, who will take on the field role for the Property Maintenance inspection in addition to sidewalk inspections.

Chairperson Hemmann asked what he could or would do differently.

Michael Turner responded that the department is looking to improve the ability for customers to do more at home. The View Point software will allow someone to take out a permit, look at site plans and schedule inspections and the GIS component will upgrade the mapping.

Jeff Bridges noted that to redesign Lonnie Davis' position to include his other functions, money has been put aside in case the salary will need to be enhanced.

Michael Turner stated that the budget also includes line striping within the budget and the CRCOG bid is used. CRCOG has changed their bidding procedure which are now done annually instead of every two years.

Councilor Montinieri asked if the master plan includes the sidewalks and paving.

Michael Turner responded that with regards to sidewalks, the paving program is followed. They also try to keep some money set aside for spot repairs. He noted that homeowners are responsible for the maintenance of the sidewalks but if a town tree damages the sidewalk, then the Town is responsible for the repair.

Councilor Montinieri asked about the homeowners' response to the sidewalk notices from Lonnie Davis.

Michael Turner responded that the response has been good.

Councilor Drake noted that the whole budget increased 7% and asked what is going to be done for next year.

Jeff Bridges responded that one of the discussions that needs to be done after the budget is what kind of services does the Town Council want to provide because it does become unsustainable.

Councilor Drake commented that services can't be cut but can't keep going up.

Tony Martino commented that at one time the department had \$50,000 a year to do sidewalks with and last year it was cut to \$35,000. The amount of money that was received last year went strictly to fix tornado damage so the liability issues were not completed. He also added that they are trying to take care of the liabilities to keep the insurance down.

Jeff Bridges commented that for substantial dollars in the future, services will need to be selected carefully.

Councilor Kotkin commented that Rocky Hill and Newington is going to have a three-town engineering department.

Councilor Manousos commented that a lot of work is being done in-house which does eliminate hiring consultants, but asked if there was a way to put a number on what is actually saved.

Michael Turner responded that with the Goff Road project, a consultant could have been hired at a cost of \$100,000 to \$120,000 to design and administer the construction. Consultants cost at least \$100,000 to do the survey and the design aspect of the jobs.

Michael Turner also noted that the hard construction cost in the capital budget can be figured at 10% for the architectural or engineering services related to that.

Councilor Drake commented that his rates are the employees.

Michael Turner responded that a typical PD would be billed out at about \$125/hour.

Tony Martino commented on the building permit fees. The reason for the differential is normally they use the average of 250/year and keep it constant from year to year. This year because of the tornado, the roofing and siding permits went up 300% to 400%. He figured that because so many were done this year, next year the number would be dramatically reduced, so he reduced the amount. But then what happened this year, Brian O'Connor went to a new way of re-evaluating permits, and based on that, revenues went up. Tony Martino explained that what was for six months, doubled it to come up with the new number.

Councilor Manousos noted that it was basic what your trend line looks like.

Tony Martino responded that the others were based on a trend line. If a big project came in, they could not depend on it because they don't know when it is going to start.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

At 6:40 p.m., Councilor Manousos moved **"TO ADJOURN THE MEETING"** seconded by Councilor Kotkin. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 5-0-0.

Dolores Sassano  
Town Clerk

*Approved by vote of Council  
May 17, 2010*